Thérèse of Lisieux

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In 1912, two years before the process for her canonisation was opened, a priest teaching in a seminary in the Diocese of Glasgow wrote a short hagiography comparing a relatively obscure and recently deceased French Carmelite nun to 'a Campion or an Ignatius, a Teresa of Avila, or a John of the Cross'.[1] Canonised in 1925 and declared by Pope Pius X to be 'the greatest saint of modern times',[2] this chapter examines the little known part played by British Catholics in the development of worldwide devotion to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux after her death in 1897 and through the globalisation of her cult in the first three decades of the twentieth century.

Focusing on the pivotal part played by Father Thomas Nimmo Taylor in the beatification process, and the part played by other Bishops and clergy throughout England, encompassing both Lancashire and London, this chapter also explores the role of ordinary Catholic women and men in the 'making' of devotion to this now ubiquitous saint. British Catholics were foundational to the evolution of the *fin de siècle* cult of the 'Little Flower' – from providing one of the first miracles considered by the Vatican (a Glaswegian woman cured of a tumour in 1909) through to the consolidation of Thérèsian devotion when commemorated in stone or invoked through image, holy cloth and bone. Through examining the processes surrounding the construction of her sanctity, and understandings of her intercessional and therapeutic efficacy, it is possible to identity both the persistence of late nineteenth-century Ultramontane commitments well into the twentieth-century - as Lucy Underwood's chapter also shows.[3] Simultaneously, in the consolidation of her cult in the decades following and the deployment of a self-consciously 'modern' and 'mass market' Catholicism using different devotional rhetorics and communicative mechanisms, it is also possible to see the adaptation of

conceptions of sanctity and healing into the new century and particularly after the First World War.[4]

Utilising a cachet of ex-votos from British Catholics preserved in the archives of the Carmelite convent in Lisieux, as well as material housed in Monsignor Taylor's reliquary centre at Carfin (Motherwell), this chapter analyses the growing appeal of Thérèse in the early years of the twentieth century. The Little Flower, recognised within a decade of her death as 'very sweet [yet] very powerful',[5] was invoked by her English and Scottish clients to address their fears and anxieties about their health, families, and the fulfilment of domestic responsibilities. Through her metaphorical and sometimes material 'embodiment', and her 'envisioning' as a heavenly advocate, British Catholics reworked ideas about Christian virtue (and its democratization), shifting gender roles, and the distinctiveness of a British (while simultaneously continental) Catholic identity for this growing and increasingly confident minority within a Protestant nation.

'Apostle of the Cause': Monsignor Canon Thomas Nimmo Taylor

In a requiem sermon delivered on 5 December 1963 by Monsignor John Conroy DD – given the absence of the entire Scottish Hierarchy at the second session of the Second Vatican Council – the Vicar General eulogised the recently deceased, 89 year-old Thomas Taylor to the vast congregation which packed Motherwell Cathedral:

> His mind was attuned to Sanctity: he was after holiness, wherever he could find it. … This attraction to sanctity manifested itself in various ways – his love for modern saints, for example … Holy places, too, filled him with delight …. Relics too he cherished – a chapel full of them. Some of them may be of doubtful authenticity but, in his childlike faith he reverenced them for what they purported to be. … it is not for us to judge him. But may we not say that his very faults were the result of his exuberant enthusiasm.[6]

As Monsignor Conroy had earlier surmised, his role as 'promoter of the spirituality of St. Teresa' was 'surely … the crowning point of [his] life' and 'well may we be proud to acclaim one of our own Scottish priests as the apostle of such a cause.'[7]

Born in Greenock in 1873 to an English teacher father and Irish mother, Thomas Nimmo Taylor was the eldest of four boys, three of whom trained for the priesthood. Tellingly, his own priestly formation was at the seminary of Saint Suplice in Paris and then the Catholic University, which immersed him in a distinctive nineteenth-century French devotional piety and theological landscape.[8] Long before worldwide fame prompted the institution of national pilgrimages to the Marian pilgrimage site of Lourdes, from 1893 Father Taylor repeatedly visited this apparition site in the Pyrénées[9] and sought to publicise the shrine and its seer St Bernadette to an Anglophone audience, chiefly through his 1911 publication *Lourdes and its Miracles*.[10]

In a similar vein, Taylor's francophone religious networks alerted him to the distinctive spirituality and believed sanctity of an enclosed and recently deceased Carmelite nun, Marie-Françoise-Thérèse Martin. After an austere and seemingly uneventful life in a convent, and while dying of tuberculosis at the age of twenty-four, Soeur Thérèse was requested by her Prioress (and elder sister) to write an account of her childhood and fervent prayer life.[11] The resulting three documents, published posthumously as a spiritual autobiography *l'Histoire d'une Âme,* were circulated to 2,000 Carmelite convents in lieu of an obituary and obtained an almost immediate wider appeal in their programmatic description of 'the little way' – a 'way of spiritual childhood' as Thérèse described it, or 'trust and absolute self-surrender', offering to God 'the flowers of little sacrifices'.[12] Father Taylor was ordained the year that Soeur Thérèse died and he read *The Story of a Soul* shortly after its publication in 1898. From 1901 he became a frequent pilgrim to the Carmelite convent in Lisieux (in which her two sisters still resided) and

thereafter assumed an important role in the promotion of knowledge of Thérèse's life and the 'roses' (or favours) which the Little Flower was already bestowing on those asking for intercessions or assistance in living a Christ-like 'little way'.

There is a well-established tradition that Father Taylor was the first person to suggest that the cause for Thérèse's canonisation be introduced.[13] Irrespective of the full truth of this claim, it is certainly the case that his writings – undertaken around his post-ordination duties as Chair of Sacred Scripture and Church History at St Peter's College seminary Glasgow – played an essential part in the dissemination of information about and foundational devotion to the Little Flower. Beginning with *As Little Children*, which very quickly sold over 100,000 copies,[14] his 1912 translation of *The Story of a Soul* was the first full autobiography of Thérèse Martin and was immensely popular throughout the English-speaking world. The volume's successor, *A Little White Flower,* similarly went through reprint after reprint.[15] Detailed correspondence between Father Taylor and the Convent in Lisieux survives, with a first letter in fluent French praising *l'Histoire d'une Âme* as an incomparable book and asking for a relic.[16] Intimate, detailed and directive correspondence with Sister Anne is preserved around the time of the first publication of *The Story of a Soul*, discussing sales (9000 copies for the first edition, 3000 more in reprint, and 8000 copies of the second edition - 'breaking every publishing record'),[17] the reproduction of photographs and illustrations of Thérèse,[18] and the perils of literal translations.[19] Father Taylor takes great pleasure within these letters to notify Carmel of striking (English and Scottish) 'roses' that should publicized, [20] but he also seizes the opportunity to dispense advice on the management of the momentum behind the beatification, such as avoiding:

> references to 1/8 for masses … I have heard it criticised. You are not "touting" for Masses, I know, but I'd avoid all shadow of seeking for them, espec[ially] as they do not benefit the cause in any way.[21]

Alongside the exchange of familial news and greetings, and pleas for the continued prayers of Thérèse's sisters for his ministry,[22] these letters also make clear Father Taylor's intense involvement, micro-management and emotional investment in the canonisation cause.

The role of Father Taylor in personally forging and fostering networks of promotion and devotional patronage within British lay and clerical circles is also beyond doubt. His energy and enthusiasm for furthering devotion to the saint knew few bounds, especially upon leaving his teaching post in 1915 for parish duties at St Francis Xavier in Carfin. An important enlistment in the task of mainstreaming devotion to St Thérèse was Taylor's fellow Suplician seminary graduate and friend, Francis Bourne. The youthful Bishop of Southwark, who was then translated to the Archdiocese of Westminster (and promoted to the red hat of Cardinal) was introduced to the spirituality and writings of the Little Flower of Jesus by Taylor, who asked for Bourne's input on his translation of *l'Histoire d'une Âme* and enclosed a relic with the manuscript.[23] Devotion to St Thérèse was to be an enduring and fundamental component of Archbishop Bourne's prayer life,[24] evidenced not only through the preface he wrote for the 1912 Autobiography,[25] but also through his frequent pilgrimages to Lisieux[26] and the Thérèsian shrine Taylor later created at Carfin.[27] Another important convert to the Saint's cult, following his conversion to Catholicism when reading *The Story of a Soul*,[28] was the charismatic preacher Father Vernon Johnson. Confessing in correspondence to Mother Agnes in 1920 that Thérèse 'took me out of Anglicanism only just in time [as] I can see now how perilous my presence was in the midst of so much popularity and success',[29] Father Johnson worked with Archbishop Bourne in Westminster fostering late vocations[30] before his appointment to the University of Oxford chaplaincy and foundation of the *Association of*

Priests of St Teresa.[31] These clerical promoters were joined by laity of all classes, 'busy mothers and toiling men' as Father Taylor put it,[32] as well as numerous women religious - including those within the raft of newly established Carmelite convents in Great Britain - which were themselves unequivocally attributed by Taylor to intercession of Thérèse.[33] Interviewed about his part in the saint-making process towards the end of his life, Monsignor Canon Taylor's self-effacing summation of his efforts was as follows:

> I have tried to make the Servant of God known, both by distributing little pictures of her, and by helping her autobiography to reach a wide circle of readers, especially in Great Britain, the Colonies, and the United States.[34]

As we will see, his efforts extended well beyond the mere production of pictures and publications (important as these were), to include active participation in the furtherance of Thérèse's cause as the second person to speak, after her sister (and Mother Superior), at the Vatican beatification tribunal.[35] To this end, as early as 1909 Taylor persuaded *The Glasgow Observer* (a Scottish Catholic weekly) to publish acknowledgements of 'favours received' through the believed intervention of the Little Flower. By 1910, there were already 87 such notices in print[36] and Taylor ensured that dramatic miracles attributed to the future saint were carefully documented and forwarded to Lisieux for publication in *Pluie de Roses*. From 1907 until her canonisation in 1925, these Carmel-produced volumes detailing healings and favours obtained from all parts of the globe were published annually, amounting to over 3,000 pages.[37] Father Taylor's role in stimulating and stoking this world-wide devotion to Soeur Thérèse cannot be overestimated – indeed in this vein Pope Benedict XVI is reported to have said:

> I am not surprised at the enthusiasm of the French over their country-woman, but the extraordinary devotion of the English-speaking nations is to me the Finger of God. HIC MIHI EST DIGNUS DEI. I shall canonise her as speedily as possible.[38]

Beatified by Pope Pius XI on 29 April 1923, and canonised by the same pope two years later on 17 May, the unappreciated role of ordinary British men and women in endorsing and substantiating this making of a modern saint will now be discussed.

Thérèse's Roses in an English (and Scottish) Garden

In his 1927 publication *St Thérèse of Lisieux*, Father Taylor outlined the intricacies of the canonisation process to an interested public and described the six supporting miracles considered by the Vatican,[39] including the two French cases which were examined in detail to substantiate Thérèse's designation as Blessed.[40] The publication also included a section entitled 'The British Isles and St Thérèse', which outlined the first recorded 'Rose' across the channel on 8 November 1908. This healing of the badly injured foot of a Good Shepherd postulant in a London convent was much publicised, especially in her hometown of Glasgow,[41] and within the space of a year over 450 favours had been reported in the British Catholic press.[42] Within this same publication, Father Taylor sought to create a transnational holy genealogy between the French Carmelite and the medieval British Isles, asserting:

> the Little Flower is deeply loved in the land where once lived St Simon Stock, to whom Our Lady revealed the scapular of Mount Carmel. Of the Roses forwarded to the convent in Lisieux from St Thérèse's English garden, two are chosen for publication here.[43]

Tellingly, the two favours reproduced were both from Anglicans who had read *A Little White Flower* and, under quite different circumstances, converted to Catholicism. The first from 'a grateful client' centred on receipt of a relic from the Carmel of Lisieux and the reactions of her Vicar who was 'scorn[ful] of my "superstition"', leading to the realisation that 'since the religion of my birth rejected her, I too, would be a Catholic'.[44] The second 'Rose' came from an anonymous writer who, in florid terms, dwelt upon Thérèse's intercession

in ‘draw[ing] me back from the brink of hell’, and overcoming ‘innumerable defilements with which I sullied my soul’. Contrasting ‘the spotless purity of her soul and the utter vileness of mine!’, the writer styled themselves ‘the Little Flower of Thérèse’ and recounted ‘feeling the sensible presence and continual assistance of the sweet Saint’ over a period of nine months until ‘the devil took flight’.[45] Within these two exemplar there is presented a triumphalist Catholicism which is pure, powerful and self-consciously distinctive in the face of Protestant prejudice. Yet these case studies were hardly representative and served a clear authorial purpose, defensively claiming Thérèse for an Ultramontane (and indigenous) Catholicism in the face of buoyant Edwardian Anglo-Catholicism and particularly pronounced Scottish sectarianism. These ‘conversion narratives’ continued to feature as the decades went on and there was increasing interest in the saint and her intercessory reputation from those outside the flock. The most famous example of this cross-denominational affection and admiration, from one clearly on the fringes of organised religion, was Vita Sackville-West’s double biography of Teresa of Avila and Thérèse of Lisieux, *The Eagle and the Dove*.[46]

Perhaps the most publicised favour, and certainly the ‘cure’ that served as a stimulus to early British interest in the Carmelite wonderworker was the miraculous healing of a Glaswegian widow, Mrs Helen Dorans, from inoperable cancer.[47] This was the intercession advanced by Father Taylor to the beatification tribunal (witness 28), though excluded because ‘it makes no reference to either Thérèse’s virtues or her renown for holiness’.[48] Nevertheless, its inclusion in the tribunal process ensured that the specifics of the case are recorded in some detail within the archive at Lisieux. These include first-hand accounts from the miraculée and her children (Agnes and Joseph), verbatim statements attributable to the patient’s doctor, and the testimony of a longstanding personal friend and spiritual adviser, Sister M. Teresa RSM. The bare facts of Mrs Doran’s condition are uncontrovertibly described within these documents: suffering from a tumour that had grown

for at least eight years, she had been in constant pain and, since 1907, had hardly been able to move out of bed or sleep for sustained periods of time. She had visited the Western Infirmary in Glasgow on two or three occasions and had been told that her cancer was proliferative and inoperable. In July 1909, Dr Carmichael told the family that there was nothing now to be done, save pain alleviation, and that the patient would gradually become weaker and weaker before slipping into unconsciousness. Described by Sister Teresa as 'a most religious good woman and possessed of a warm Faith',[49] Novena after Novena had been made by friends and relatives for Mrs Doran's recovery and Lourdes water was brought by Sister Teresa on one of her visits. On 22 August 1909, when the patient had not taken solid food for ten weeks and was on the point of dying, Sister Teresa recounted to Father Taylor the enlistment of Thérèse's help:

> I said to [Mrs Dorans] then "Now that we have tried nearly all the known Saints in the Court of Heaven suppose we try a little one who has not yet been Canonized?" I talked to her a little about Sr Thérèse, then proposed a Novena in her honour. That she should go to Our Lady, St Joseph and St Teresa and ask them to take her, Thérèse, to Our Divine Lord; but that she was to obtain from the S[acred] Heart Mrs D's recovery.[50]

At a time when the life and legacy of Soeur Thérèse Martin were little known, expediency and an insurance of orthodoxy were served by the addition of these well-known saints and devotions to the new intercessor.

Helen Doran herself provided an account of the effect of the Novena and her miraculous cure on 27th August 1909 - though transcribed by Sister Teresa, and written as an official testimony in the third person:

> About 11 P.M. having taken a small piece of ice, the poor patient had a severe vomiting attack, after which quite exhausted she fell asleep – this would be about 11.30. … For the last two days previously the poor invalid's sight had become much impaired. She could only see very indistinctly, just distinguish figures. She slept on quietly (her first restful, natural sleep for many years) until about half past five next morning (Friday

> 27th) when she was aroused by a gentle pressure on each shoulder, as if someone lent over her. At the same time she felt a sweet, warm breath in her face, and she knew an unseen presence about her bed. On opening her eyes she saw distinctly everything in the room even to the pattern on the wallpaper – all distress and pain were gone and she felt perfectly well, being able to move her arms and limbs freely. The dear "Little Thérèse" had come down to pass some of her "Heaven" in bringing health and happiness to that sorrowing family.[51]

The testimonies written and signed by Mrs Doran's children dwelt on the terminal medical prognosis given by those at the Western Infirmary and the treating physician, which they juxtaposed with verbatim quotations from Dr Carmichael when he examined the patient next day:

> "Mrs Doran can you give me any reason for this great change[?] … everything is normal, no trace of anything here, save a tiny lump about the size of a marble. I have never had a case like this and I say if this is going to be permanent it is nothing short of a miracle."[52]

This affirmation of the occurrence from an external, non-religious quarter was summarised by Mrs Doran in her official statement:

> The Doctor was perfectly puzzled and though a Protestant he declared that if any other doctor were brought in to the patient and told what had been her state a few hours before, he would not have believed it. He said that she had been beyond any medical skill to help and that a Higher Hand had wrought the cure, which could not have been brought about by any human means.[53]

Dr Carmichael subsequently provided a medical certificate attesting to this profound and permanent change in the patient's health, which was forwarded to Lisieux.[54]

This 'Rose' has been given extended treatment here not only because of its early date and formative role in the establishment of the cult of Thérèse in Britain (and elsewhere), but also because it exhibits many of the features

which became hallmarks of the Thérèsian miracles over the years.[55] The intervention of the Little Flower at the point of death and a sudden miraculous transformation in medical condition were reoccurring topes, alongside the intellectual incredulity and 'conversion' of medical professionals (particularly if Protestant). As I, and others such as Mary Heimann have discussed in more detail elsewhere, the complex interaction of the 'supernatural' and the 'scientific', and a critique of modernist epistemologies were explanatory glosses often placed upon these favours by their interpreters and promoters.[56] Also of note here and throughout many of the reported favours was an assertion of the fervent, child-like faith of the recipient – in mimesis of Thérèse herself – and reports of an experiential, bodily and sensory encounter with the soon-to-be Saint. While this material, incarnational encounter is a well-established element of many saint's cults, it was given particular encouragement (through modern means of communication and technology) in the case of Thérèse. Inevitably Taylor also played a prominent role in this envisioning and embodiment of the Little Flower of Lisieux, through his creation of spaces of encounter and sites of commemoration.

Carfin and Ribbleton: Materialising British Catholic Devotion to Saint Thérèse of Lisieux

Shortly after her death, Soeur Thérèse Martin became an instantly recognisable celebrity not only through her best-selling writings but also through the reproduction of her photographs and illustrations[57] and the circulation of her relics, including clippings of hair, pieces of clothing, bone splinters, fragments of letters, earth from her coffin and threads from her pillow. As Sophia Deboick as extensively charted, modern Weberian notions of charisma were combined with technologically facilitated mechanisms of reproduction and distribution to create readily reproducible, commercially packed ideal of sanctity.[58] Within the formative years of 1897 and 1925, it would seem that around 17,500,000 relics and 30,500,000 pictures of Thérèse

were distributed and that 'most early accounts of her miracles show that supplicants possessed or were given a portrait or relic of her'.[59]

The familiarity of British Catholics with the image of Thérèse was equally facilitated by these mechanisms but also by the little-known activities of Father Taylor in creating the first shrine to the Little Flower in the British Isles. Harnessing what he called the 'enforced leisure' of around 300 parishioner-colliers during the 1921-6 mining strikes, Taylor sought 'to make a long cherished dream a reality, the building in Scotland of an open-air Basilica to the Mother of God'.[60] The result was a 'Scottish Lourdes' and the replication of the grotto and its rituals,[61] complete with its own 'miraculous spring' which facilitated a raft of healings and cures well into the 1960s which I have explored elsewhere.[62] Father Taylor also saw an opportunity here to augment growing devotion to Soeur Thérèse, and wrote to Lisieux for consent to establish a Little Flower shrine. In an account written by Taylor in the 1950s about the history of Carfin, he outlined the response of Mother Agnes to the incorporation of a statue of Thérèse alongside the copy of the rock of Massabielle:

> the child who had loved Mary so passionately would certainly not rob Our Lady of her glory. Keep her statue in the Grotto! We will ask our Thérèse to draw souls to Carfin and so prove how she loves Our Lady.[63]

The fame of the shrine (co-opting both Marian and Thérèsian devotion) grew in anticipation of the beatification, drawing 250,000 pilgrims in the first three months of 1923,[64] and prompting a leading newspaper to quip jocularly that 'every char-a-banc in Scotland can find its way to Carfin unattended'.[65] A statue of Carrara marble, made to specifications provided by her sisters at Lisieux was installed beside the grotto and the shrine was improved several times, until it eventually became a mound-shaped, raised rockery surrounded by roses.[66] Thérèse's canonisation three months earlier was publically celebrated at Carfin on 30 September 1925, when over 30,000 people came to

this little mining village outside Glasgow see her statue and relics carried around the rose-decorated shrine and to participate in a torchlight procession.[67] In effusive, self-congratulatory terms Father Taylor exalted:

> [This] was doubtless the most striking torchlight procession in the history of Scottish devotion … The enthusiasm was unbounded, and the widespread joy was a clear sign that the rainfall of spiritual roses had grown into a torrent. May it be a prelude to the homecoming of the children of St Margaret to the Faith of their fathers! And may these words, laid like a wreath of simple flowers at the feet of Mary and Thérèse, draw a multitude of hearts unto them, wherever the English tongue is spoken.[68]

From these beginnings, the creative invocation and celebration of St Thérèse would take many different forms, including the staging of a Thérèsian Rosary Pageant centred around the procession of a parishioner dressed as the Carmelite nun,[69] and the attribution of many healing cures to Father Taylor's prized relic of St Thérèse – the contact of a saintly body with a broken, infirm or fragile pilgrim body. Accounts in the archive describe its effectiveness against more prosaic ailments such as a large goitre,[70] blood poisoning,[71] or disfiguring warts,[72] through to the spectacular healing in 1934 of Miss Mary Traynor from debilitating rheumatoid arthritis and a wasting illness rendering her near death. Writing later about the application of the relic to her joints and legs, alongside a blessing from Father Taylor, Miss Traynor described a warming sensation, 'like a thread of fire', and before the eyes of those assembled she left her wheelchair and walked to her car.[73] Generating a huge correspondence within the mainstream and religious press, and an entire file of testimony and medical reports,[74] Miss Traynor's sudden recovery from her various illnesses was not reversed, nor was there a relapse of symptoms until her death of old age in 1970.[75]

The fame and appeal of Carfin soon extended throughout Scotland and beyond and with the development of a small train station, the 'Grotto Halt', pilgrimages of the laity from 'across the border' commenced from Manchester, Bolton, Tyneside and Liverpool in 1925.[76] Some English dioceses

developed a particularly strong affection for St Thérèse and her shrine at Carfin - for example there were four separate pilgrimages from Preston in 1930.[77] Yet Carfin also provided a stimulus for the development of Thérèsian shrines elsewhere, particularly throughout the newly created Diocese of Lancashire. [78] Father James Fleming was ordained in the Liverpool Archdiocese on 17 May 1913 and was serving as a parish priest at St Joseph's Preston when the decision was taken in 1928 to open a new church in Ribbleton (Preston).[79] He was inducted as first rector of the Parish of the Blessed Sacrament in early November 1928 and immediately conceived of the idea of creating a shrine to St Thérèse – officially enlisting 'Fr T. N. Taylor, of Carfin' to open 'the Shrine of the Little Flower' on 18 November 1928.[80] A statue of the 'Rose Queen' was commissioned and a framed image of the saint – based on the 1899 charcoal portrait executed by her sister Céline (Sr Geneviève of the Holy Face) – was enshrined within the church (figure 1). Almost immediately people came from miles around on pilgrimage to Preston, and the shrine became a site of fervent devotion and countless 'favours'.

From the outset Father Fleming sought the spiritual support of the Carmel in Lisieux for this endeavour and remained keen to demonstrate, through letters of thanksgiving and details of 'Roses' received, the success of the shrine and support for this French saint across the channel.[81] In 1931 he sent to Lisieux a bound, typed folio entitled 'Letters of Gratitude to "The Little Flower"', which outlined in detail the favours received by ten of Thérèse's clients in the north of England.[82] In subsequent years, he also forwarded to the Carmelite convent individual letters of thanksgiving and this correspondence, present without comment in the archive, provides an intimate portrait of the anxieties and struggles of ordinary Catholic men and women in the context of interwar Britain. These favours are also illuminating, especially when compared to the more spectacular, health-related 'roses' attributed to Carfin,[83] or Thérèse's palpable assistance with the trauma of the trenches and the distribution of over a million devotional medals to French

soldiers in 1915.[84] In contrast, the favours at Ribbleton catalogue a cross-section of the laity's relational difficulties, material worries and everyday lives given a providential interpretation through the believed intercession of Thérèse. A great many of these letters relate to economic and chiefly working-class preoccupations, including the fulfilment of gendered responsibilities relating to 'work' and 'breadwinning' at a time of severe economic downturn. As the Catholic weekly *The Universe* termed it in 1931, while reporting on the institution of a third Novena service on a Thursday evening to accommodate crowds of over 2,300 people each week, these devotions to St Thérèse were an 'Out-of-Works Service'.[85] Father Fleming explained:

> Quite a large proportion of the people who come here have been out of work for a long time. Many of them are on the 'dole'. Up to date, more than 200 people have given me detailed proof that after long periods of unemployment they have come to one of our services, placed their petitions in the box, and very soon afterwards obtained positions. I could give you literally columns of instances of other authenticated 'favours' received here through the intercession of St Theresa of Lisieux.[86]

In his letters to Lisieux, Father Fleming gave further details of some of these instances, including 'one of the first big favours granted by her at the Shrine of Ribbleton, Preston' and dated Easter Sunday 1930, when the petition of a non-Catholic nurse for her brother was believed to have secured his employment after three years out of work.[87] Given the severity of the Depression in the north of England (as well as parts of Scotland),[88] there was clearly a localised need being served by the shrine and a mass appeal, through the creation of hope and a sense of agency. Yet Thérèse's clients were not all out-of-work husbands and fathers – petitioning on their own behalf, or as the subject of their wives' prayers – but devotees also included a sixteen year old girl dying of pneumonia[89] and frustrated lovers who, after four years of obstacles and misunderstanding, 'have the pleasure of [each others'] company' and regard this saintly match-making 'not as a rose, or a bouquet, but as a vast rose garden'.[90] A letter of thanksgiving headed 'A Shower of Roses' from a woman in Preston demonstrated Thérèse's efficacy across a

wide field of activity. Itemising the 'graces and blessings [which] have been showered down upon me and my family', her interventions included assistance with one daughter's nuptial mass and subsequent pregnancy, redress of another daughter's ill-health, attention to the intercessor's own 'financial straits' and, for her husband, 'the grace of [re]conversion' after ten years of bitter separation from the church.[91] As Sheila Kaye-Smith observed some years later in her confessional study of early twentieth-century sanctity:

> [Thérèse] comes with a special message for an age that badly needs inspiration. It is an age that has lost its aristocracy, its kings, its geniuses, its great men. It is an age of mass production, of mediocrity, of democracy, the rank and file, the common man. … Thérèse's call is to the average man, who in our day exists for the first time as a real person instead of a statistical calculation. She calls even him to be a saint.[92]

In the case of many of the ex-votos that have been preserved from the Novena services in Ribbleton, the use of the male pronoun in respect of the Saint's devotees seems largely justified. Despite nineteenth-century, cross-denominational fears of the 'feminisation of religion',[93] Thérèse seems to have generated fervent affection from the soldier, the factory worker and the miner, as well as the high-profile priests committed to her promotion. In this, she echoes the appeal generated by the Scottish nun (and former factory worker) Venerable Margaret Sinclair, who was commonly known as 'Scotland's Little Flower'.[94] In contrast to the near contemporaneous cause for the beatification of the Bootle mystic, Teresa Higginson, and the divergent reactions which her extraordinary life and mystical experiences elicited from English Catholics,[95] Thérèse's 'littleness' and the self-conscious promotion of her 'domesticity' and 'ordinariness', as well as her 'sweetness' seemingly made her a more accessible and palatable patron to British men and women.[96]

Conclusion

At a meeting on 11 October 1938, the Scottish Hierarchy made a remarkably generous decision to sponsor one of the memorial chapels to be created in the newly erected International Basilica of St Thérèse in Lisieux. The decision to raise the £3000 from Advent collections was taken 'because our country was a

pioneer in the devotion to the Little Flower' [and] 'to create a new bond between herself and the land of St Margaret.'[97] In what would become a post-World War II pantheon of international Catholicism, the altar bore the inscription:

> Built in honour of the Child Jesus and as an example of gratitude to the Little Flower of Jesus to hasten the conversion of Great Britain and to implore for it and 'Sweet France', mother of saints, the shower of roses of blessed Thérèse of the Child Jesus.
> Revd. Thomas N Taylor, of the Diocese of Glasgow.

This chapter has charted the pioneering and strenuous efforts of Monsignor Canon Thomas Taylor, beginning more than twenty years before her canonisation, to publicise the life of Soeur Thérèse and to promote her veneration and emulation. It has also explored the evolving bond between Saint Thérèse and the land of St Margaret, as well as that of St George. While Glaswegian Catholics were at the forefront of devotion to the Little Flower, particularly with the establishment of her first British shrine at Carfin, the faithful across the country, as well as religious and clergy from Lancashire to London, were readily convinced of her sanctity and her powerful, intercessional efficacy. As the inscription on the Scottish Memorial Chapel attested, it was the devotion and conversion of Great Britain that was commemorated and as this understanding of British Catholic identity encompassed regional and national variations, it could also incorporate and correspond with continental sensibilities and affectations.

This chapter has also explored the role of ordinary Catholic men and women, through their prayers, offerings, veneration of statues and relics, and through their testimonies at Ribbleton or to Lisieux, in the 'making' of this modern saint. Whether as the Saint of those 'out-of-work', particularly working-class men in the late 1920s, or as a miracle worker renown for healing cancer and mending familial relationships, St Thérèse was perceived to be a 'saint of the people' and her cliental - as explored within this chapter - encompassed the great and the good, as well as the more ordinary within cities and villages across the British Isles.

[1] T. N. Taylor (ed.), *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns and Oates, 1912), 12. Marie Françoise Thérèse Martin, *Soeur Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower of* Jesus, ed. T. N. Taylor (London, 1912).
[2] See B. Ulanov, *The Making of a Modern Saint* (London: Jonathan Cape, 1967).
[3] Insert page references.
[4] See J. Shaw, *Octavia, daughter of God: the story of a female messiah and her followers* (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011);
[5] Letter from Francis Colchester SJ to Lisieux, 11 September 1911 [Archives du Carmel de Lisieux (hereafter ACL) Angleterre A-Z (A-Z)].
[6] Typed note headed 'Right Rev. Mgr. Thomas N. Canon Taylor', 3 [ACL, Taylor, Thomas Nimmo Mgr. 1873-1963 (TNT)]
[7] *Ibid,* 2. See also R. P. Stéphane-Joseph Piat OFM, 'Un Promoter du Culte Thérèsien dans les Pays de Langue Anglaise', *Annales*, November 1964, 10-13 [ACL TNT].
[8] See R. D. E. Burton, *Holy Tears, Holy Blood: Women, Catholicism and the Culture of Suffering in France, 1840-1970* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2004).
[9] Letter from Thomas Taylor to his brother, James Bede, Autumn 1906, 9 [Scottish Catholic Archives (SCA), HC9/2 TNT (TN Taylor)]
[10] The handbook was reprinted by the Catholic weekly, *The Universe*, in 1919 – see S. McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor of Carfin* (Glasgow: J. Burns, 1972), 176.
[11] For an extended discussion of the hagiography of St Thérèse, see A. Harris, *Faith in the Family: A Lived Religious History of Catholicism, 1945-1982* (Manchester: Manchester University Press, 2013), 208-224.
[12] T. Martin, *The Story of a Soul: A New Translation* (Brewster: Paraclete Press, 2006), 210-25.
[13] See http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr/english/carmel/index.php/2-thomas-nimmo-taylor [accessed 7 August 2014].
[14] McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor*, 278.
[15] T. N. Taylor, "*A Little White Flower", the Story of Saint Thérèse of Lisieux* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1926).
[16] Letter from T. Taylor to Lisieux, 24 February 1902 [ACL Taylor, TNT].
[17] Letter from T. Taylor to Anne of Jesus, n.d. (#1) [ACL TNT].
[18] For a gallery of photographs of Thérèse, mostly taken by her sister Céline, see http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr/english/carmel/index.php/47-photos-english/gallery/27-47-photos-english#fwgallerytop [accessed 7 August, 2014].
[19] Letter from T. Taylor to Anne of Jesus, n.d. (#2) [ACL TNT].
[20] Letter from T. Taylor to Anne of Jesus, n.d. (l#3) [ACL TNT].
[21] Taylor to Anne of Jesus, #2 [ACL TNT].
[22] Taylor to Anne of Jesus, #3 [ACL TNT].
[23] McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor*, 278.
[24] M. Vicars, *By the Thames Divided: Cardinal Bourne in Southward and Westminster* (Leominster: Gracewing, 2013), 583-4.
[25] Taylor, *Soeur Thérèse*, xii. See also the preface to Taylor, "A Little White Flower", x.
[26] Archbishop Bourne was one of the first Englishmen to visit the saint's grave, and returned to Lisieux in 1919 – see V. Johnson, *Our Guiding Star: A Short Life of St Teresa of Lisieux* (London: Burns and Oates, 1951), 89.
[27] 'Memorable Day at Carfin, Cardinal Bourne greeted at Grotto by 50,000' *Glasgow Evening News*, 21 June 1926 [Carfin Shrine Archives (CSA): Note Book 7 (NB), 116].
[28] V. Johnson, *One Lord, One Faith: An Explanation* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1929).
[29] Letter from V. Johnson to Mother Agnes, 2 November 1920 [ACL Ther-13 Vernon Johnson].
[30] Vicars, *Thames Divided*, 474-5. See also 'St Teresa and Her Mission' in V. Johnson, (ed.), *The Mission of a Saint: Essays on the Significance of St Thérèse of Lisieux* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1947), 14-21 and *Spiritual Childhood: A Study of St. Teresa's Teaching* (London: Sheed and Ward, 1953).
[31] On the complex relationship of Thérèse herself with priestly vocation, see S. Lösel, 'Prayer, Pain and Priestly Privilege: Claude Langlois' New Perspective on Thérèse of Lisieux', *Journal of Religion* 88(3) (2008), 273-306.

[32] Taylor, "*A Little White Flower*", xii.
[33] *Ibid*.
[34] C. O'Mahony, *St Thérèse of Lisieux by Those who Knew Her: Testimonies from the Process of Beatification* (Dublin: Veritas Publications, 1975), 75.
[35] See 'Note of Thanksgiving from Thomas Nimmo Taylor' [ACL TNT].
[36] O'Mahony, *St Thérèse*, 76
[37] F. Lang, *Smiles of God: The Flowers of St Thérèse of Lisieux* (London: Burns and Oates, 2003), 144.
[38] McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor*, 286.
[39] T. N. Taylor, *Saint Thérèse of Lisieux, the Little Flower of Jesus* (London: Burns, Oates and Washbourne, 1927), 250-1.
[40] For full details, see http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr/english/carmel/index.php/les-miracles [accessed 7 August 2014].
[41] Taylor, *Saint Thérèse* (1927), 392
[42] *Ibid*.
[43] *Ibid*, 393.
[44] *Ibid*, 394.
[45] *Ibid*, 394-5.
[46] V. Sackville-West, *The Eagle and the Dove*: A *Study in Contrasts, St Teresa of Avila, St Thérèse of Lisieux* (London: Michael Joseph, 1943).
[47] Lang, *Smiles*, 149.
[48] See http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr/english/carmel/index.php/28-helene-knight [accessed 7 August 2014].
[49] Letter from Sister Teresa to Father Taylor, 7 September 1909 [ACL Dorans (Mmn) Glasgow Ecorse (Dorans)].
[50] *Ibid*.
[51] Testimony of Mrs Helen Doran, transcribed by Sr Teresa, 6-7 [ACL Dorans].
[52] 'For Father Taylor', signed testaments of Helen, Agnes and Joseph Dorans, 1-2 [ACL Dorans].
[53] Testimony of Mrs Helen Doran, transcribed by Sr Teresa, 10-11 [ACL Dorans]
[54] 'Pluie 1, 56. –X., Angleterre, 15 October 1909' [ACL Pluie de Roses, Volume 1].
[55] A. Guise, 'Thérèse de Lisieux et ses miracles. Recompositions du surnaturel 1898-1928' (Unpublished PhD thesis, Sorbonne, Paris, 2006).
[56] A. Harris, 'Bone Idol? British Catholics and Devotion to St Thérèse of Lisieux' in Nancy Christie, Michael Gauveau and Stephen Heathorn (eds.), *The Sixties and Beyond: Dechristianization as History in North America and Western Europe, 1945-2000* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press), 429-52 and M. Heimann, 'Mysticism in Bootle: Victorian Supernaturalism as an Historical Problem', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* 64(2) (2013), 335-56.
[57] T. Taylor, 'Photos of St Bernadette and St Thérèse', *Nineteenth Century Contexts* 27(3) (2005), 269-92.
[58] S. Deboick, 'Image, Authenticity and the Cult of Thérèse of Lisieux, *1897-1959*' (Unpublished PhD thesis, University of Liverpool, 2011) and 'The Creation of a Modern Saint' in P. Clarke and T. Claydon (eds), *Saints and Sanctity* (Woodbridge: Suffolk, 2011), 376-89.
[59] Lang, *Smiles*, 144.
[60] T.N. Taylor, *The Carfin Grotto* (Glasgow: Burns, 1952), 9.
[61] For a brief history of the Carfin Grotto and its expansion into a vast complex of various saints' shrines, see http://www.carfin.org.uk [accessed 7 August, 2014].
[62] A. Harris, '"Astonishing scenes" at Carfin: Masculinity, the Miraculous and Sectarian Strife at the "Scottish Lourdes"', *Journal of Ecclesiastical History* (forthcoming 2016).
[63] Taylor, *Carfin*, 10.
[64] 'Carfin Honours Our Lady' *Novena*, 8(2) (1958), 45-52.
[65] 'Scottish Lourdes: Striking Rise in Fame of Tiny Village: Protestant interest', [CSA NB 7, 78].
[66] McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor*, 294.
[67] Taylor, "A Little White Flower" (1926), xxiii.
[68] *Ibid*.

[69] 'Carfin Grotto's Fifteenth Anniversary: Rosary can save Christian civilization', *Scottish Observer*, 8 October 1937 [CSA NB 8, 47].
[70] Letter from M. Gilmore (Harrington) to T. N. Taylor, 'Rose – Goitre', n.d. [CSA Box No. 12].
[71] 'Carfin Grotto' – cure of volunteer worker John Roche – 29 January 1937 [CSA NB 8, 10].
[72] 'Carfin Grotto: A Little Rose Flower', *Catholic Times*, 8 April 1938 [CSA NB 8, 65].
[73] CSA Box No. 5: Claims of Cures Mostly Grotto and L. F. "Roses".
[74] CSA Box No. 12 File: Grotto and L. F. Cures and Favours.
[75] McGhee, *Monsignor Taylor*, 264-5.
[76] *Ibid*, 225.
[77] *Ibid*.
[78] 'Spread of Devotion in Lancashire', handwritten note from Father Fleming (c.1930), listing the establishment of subsequent shrines at St Marys and the Sacred Heart (Preston), St Patrick's (Walton-Le-Dale), St Michael's (Alton Lane), St William's (Langridge), St Ann's (Westby near Blackpool), St Patrick's (Barrow-in-Furness) and at the Church of Christ the King (Broadgreen Liverpool) and St Mary's (Ambleside) [ACL A-Z, Father Fleming].
[79] 'Lanpriests' file. [The Talbot Library – provided with thanks by Rev Michael Dolan].
[80] *Lancaster Diocesan Directory* (1928), 17 [The Talbot Library, Preston].
[81] Fr Fleming PP to Mother Agnes, 7 February 1934 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[82] 'Letters of Gratitude to "The Little Flower"' [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[83] See Harris, 'Astonishing Scenes'.
[84] Lang, *Smiles,* 157. For a selection of correspondence, publications and ex-votos from soldiers, see http://www.archives-carmel-lisieux.fr/english/carmel/index.php/apres-1897/la-1ere-guerre [accessed 7 August 2014].
[85] 'Crowd at "Little Flower Services" Still Increasing: Long Queues Gather in Spite of Heavy Rain', *The Universe*, c.1931 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[86] *Ibid*.
[87] 'Letters of Gratitude', 1 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[88] Concerns about employment during the Depression were also present within Carfin petitions, see Harris, 'Bone Idol?', 436.
[89] Fr Fleming to Mother Agnes, 7 February 1934 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[90] F. S. Kitchen to Fr Fleming, January 1931 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[91] Unnamed female client, January 1931, 'Letters of Gratitude', 5 [ACL A-Z Fleming].
[92] S. Kaye-Smith, *Quartet in Heaven* (London: Cassell & Co, 1952), 217.
[93] See T. Van Osselaer and T. Buerman (2008) 'Feminization Thesis: A Survey of International Historiography and a Probing of the Belgian Grounds', *Revue d'Histoire Ecclésiastique*, 103(2), 1–31 and L. Delap and S. Morgan (eds), *Men, Masculinity and Religious Change in Twentieth-Century Britain* (London: Palgrave, 2013), 1-29.
[94] K. Kehoe, 'The Venerable Margaret Sinclair: An Examination of the Cause of Edinburgh;s Twentieth-Century Factory Girl', *Feminist Theology* 16(2) (2008), 169-183.
[95] See Heimann, *Mysticism* and J. Davies, 'Traditional Religion, Popular Piety or Base Superstition? The Cause for the Beatification of Teresa Higginson, ' *Recusant History* (1996-7), xxiii, 123-44.
[96] For more on the cult of St Thérèse and the slightly different appeal of the saint to men and women, see Harris, *Faith in the Family*, 217-24.
[97] 'The Scottish Memorial Chapel', Declaration of the Scottish Hierarchy [ACL TNT].

Figure 1: Melling, Postcard of the Shrine of the Little Flower, Ribbleton c.1928 [Permission of The Talbot Library, Preston, with thanks to Rev Michael Dolan].